

### REMARKS

In this Preliminary Amendment, Applicants have cancelled Claims 1-31 and 41-43 and added Claims 44-48. Claims 32-40 and 44-48 are thus pending in the present application of which Claims 32, 36 and 44 are independent claims.

Applicants have enclosed herewith a set of formal drawings for the Examiner's consideration along with this Preliminary Amendment.

In the parent U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/834,870, the Examiner required restriction to one of the following inventions under 35 U.S.C. § 121: I. Claims 1-8; II. Claims 9-18; III. Claims 19-27; IV. Claims 28-31; V. Claims 32-35; and VI. Claims 36-40. For initial prosecution in the parent application, Applicants affirmed election of 1-8, amended Claims 1, 4, and 5, cancelled Claims 2, 3, and 6 and added Claims 41-43. Applicants have therefore cancelled Claims 1-31 and 41-43 to reduce the filing fee of the present application.

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending Claims 32-40 and 44-48 should be examined together under MPEP § 809.03 and that all pending claims are patentably distinct over the prior art of record. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in complete condition for allowance and favorable action is respectfully requested.

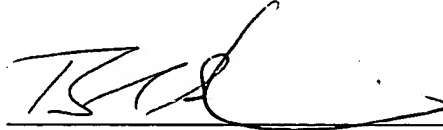
The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at his convenience should he have any questions regarding this matter.

Please charge any fees required by this Preliminary Amendment to Deposit

Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully submitted,

DORITY & MANNING, P.A.



10-30-23  
Date

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